small airlines operators for operating their scheduled flights through any of the above airports.

Helicopter service in Mumbai

2176. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to start a helicopter service in Mumbai between Chhatrapati Shivaji Airport and the city;

(b) if so, whether the consent of the residents over noise pollution has been obtained; and

(c) whether they have no objection in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVILAVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Pawan Hans Helicopter Limited, a Public Sector Undertaking under the Government of India, has a plan to introduce helicopter services between Chhatrapati Shivaji airport and the City Centre near Nariman Point in Mumbai.

(b) and (c) Discussions were held recently with some of the representatives of the Cuffe Parade Residents Association to resolve the matter amicably. However, the residents have not yet given their consent over noise pollution.

New Airport at Nagaland

2177. SHRI C. APOK JAMIR: Will the Minister of CIVILAVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plans to further improve air links in the NE Region;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard;

(c) whether there has been any proposal from the Government of Nagaland for a new airport; and

(d) if so, what is the progress thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVILAVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) In order to improve air connectivity in North East Region Alliance Air has introduced ATR-42 services *w.e.f.* December, 2002. This has increased the available of seats from 7518 to 8932 per week and the number of flights from 74 to "< 29 per week.

(c) and (d) There is a proposal from the Government of Nagaland for construction of a new airport at Chiethu near Kohima. Airports Authority of India has carried out a preliminary feasibility study in this regard.

Ahmedabad-New York Direct Flight

†2178. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government propose to operate a direct flight of Air India to New York (without changing plane) from Ahmedabad; and

(b) the number of passengers who travel through the flights of Air India ard Indian Airlines every month and the number thereof during the three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVILAVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) In the current schedule, Air India has extended six flights on the New Jersey/Paris/Mumbai sector and one service on the Chicago/London/Mumbai sector to Ahmedabad with no change of plane and the passengers booked to travel on these flights need not change plane at any of the transit points and can travel right through to Ahmedabad. However, for travel out of Ahmedabad, change of plane is required at Mumbai.

(b) The number of passengers carried by Air India and Indian Airlines (including Alliance Air) during the last three years are as under:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.